



For Immediate Release
August 12, 2009

Contact: Camille C. Purdie
(248) 426-6904

Early Farmington Hospital's History Dates Back to 1917

Archive opened at Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University

On Saturday, July 11, 2009, Botsford Commons Senior Community hosted its 2nd "Welcome Home – A Reunion," for the former patients and staff of the Michigan Hospital School, Michigan Convalescent Home and the Sister Kenny Polio Hospital – which operated on the current site of Botsford Commons between 1919 and 1958. Former patients came from as far as Long Beach, California and Plano, Texas.

This year's Reunion culminated with the formal opening of the early hospital's archive with the Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University. Botsford Commons donated its early photographic collection to the archive. The collection included portrait sized photographs of the early nursing classes and children that had been treated at the hospital. Over the years, the photographs were found tucked in corners in the basements of the original Albert-Kahn designed buildings. Attendees brought memorabilia they wished to donate to the permanent collection. "Formalizing the archive for their hospital provides a permanent home and ensures their experience is long remembered," said Kimberly Gimmarro, Executive Assistant and event coordinator.

The challenge is finding those who were part of the children's hospital in Farmington – either as patients or staff, as there are no records from the hospital. Reunion information and information on the early hospital is available on-line at www.botsfordcommons.org/reunion. Individuals who are interested in attending future reunions should contact Kimberly Gimmarro at Botsford Commons Senior Community at (248) 426-6951.

Co-Chair of the Farmington Rotary Club's "End Polio Now" Campaign, Ginger Barrons, joined this year's reunion and offered the former polio patients a complimentary End Polio Now pin. Local Rotary Clubs have expressed an interest in learning about the history of the early Farmington hospital because cases of polio were treated there, and because Rotary clubs worldwide are raising funds via the End Polio Now campaign for a matching grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to eradicate polio worldwide. "It provides a local perspective on polio – something many Americans have long since put aside since the vaccine was developed in the 1950's," said Barrons.

Two of the early hospital's buildings were designed by Albert Kahn, and remain on the site today as Botsford Senior Living Center and the Clinical Services Building. In 2022, the campus will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 1st of the two buildings.

Botsford Commons Senior Community is a non-profit corporation providing housing and service options for seniors. Located on a 30-acre campus in Farmington Hills, the

Community offers a full continuum of care for the area's senior population including short stay rehabilitation, privately owned condominiums, senior apartments and assisted living suites. For more information visit the website at: www.botsfordcommons.org.